

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-16 (Cancelled).

17. (Currently Amended) A distributor element for metering lubricant for lubricating installations, said distributor element comprising:

a housing having a lubricant inlet, a connecting passage, and a lubricant outlet;

a valve piston having a bore for allowing lubricant to flow therethrough, said valve piston being operable to move within said housing under pressure from a lubricant entering said housing through said lubricant inlet;

a first return spring for applying a pressure against said valve piston to oppose the pressure from the lubricant entering said housing through said lubricant inlet;

a dispensing piston operable to move within said housing under pressure from lubricant entering a metering chamber of said housing via said connecting passage;

a second return spring for applying a pressure against said dispensing piston to oppose the pressure from the lubricant within said metering chamber; and

a hollow supporting body arranged within said housing between said first return spring and said second return spring such that said hollow supporting body supports and provides leverage for each of said first return spring and said second return spring;

wherein said valve piston is operable to move within said housing between:

(i) a valve piston starting position, whereat said valve piston is positioned such that said bore of said valve piston allows a dispensing chamber between said dispensing piston and said valve piston to communicate with said metering chamber via said connecting passage;

(ii) a metering position, whereat said valve piston allows said lubricant inlet to communicate with said metering chamber via said connecting passage; and

(iii) an intermediate position whereat said valve piston blocks said lubricant inlet from communicating with said metering chamber via said connecting passage, and ~~blocks~~ blocks said dispensing chamber from communicating with said metering chamber via said connecting passage;

wherein said dispensing piston is operable to move within said housing from a dispensing piston starting position, whereat a volume of said metering chamber is a minimum, to a dispense

position, whereat said dispensing piston has displaced the lubricant present in said dispensing chamber through said lubricant outlet and has moved said valve piston from said metering position to said intermediate position; and

wherein, upon pressure relief at said lubricant inlet, said valve piston is operable to be moved back from said intermediate position to said valve piston starting position by said first return spring, and said dispensing piston is operable to be moved back from said dispense position to said dispensing piston starting position by said second return spring.

18. (Previously Presented) The distributor element of claim 17, wherein said valve piston, said dispensing piston, said hollow supporting body, said first return spring, and said second return spring are arranged in an axial configuration in a common passage of said housing.

19. (Previously Presented) The distributor element of claim 17, wherein said second return spring comprises a spiral coiled spring surrounding said dispensing piston.

20. (Previously Presented) The distributor element of claim 19, wherein said second return spring is arranged so as to surround said first return spring, said first return spring comprising a spiral coiled spring.

21. (Previously Presented) The distributor element of claim 17, wherein said first return spring comprises a spiral coiled spring and is accommodated in said hollow supporting body such that an end of said first return spring faces said dispensing piston, and such that said first return spring is surrounded by said second return spring, said second return spring comprising a spiral coiled spring.

22. (Previously Presented) The distributor element of claim 21, wherein said second return spring is braced on a bottom flange of said hollow supporting body.

23. (Currently Amended) The distributor element of claim 17, wherein said hollow supporting body is braced on a bearing shoulder of said housing, said housing having a first end whereat

said valve piston is located, and said housing having a second end located opposite said first end,
said bearing shoulder being located at an opposite said second end of said housing opposite
said first end where said valve piston is located.

24. (Previously Presented) The distributor element of claim 23, wherein said valve piston, said dispensing piston, said hollow supporting body, said first return spring, and said second return spring are arranged in an axial configuration in a common passage of said housing.

25. (Previously Presented) The distributor element of claim 17, wherein said hollow supporting body is fixed in position within a common passage of said housing, said common passage being divided into said metering chamber between said dispensing piston and a first end of said housing, and said dispensing chamber between said dispensing piston and said valve piston, said lubricant inlet being located at a second end of said housing opposite said first end.